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RELIGION AND SPORT STUDIES IN TURKEY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ONLINE SOURCES IN TURKISH

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ABSTRACT

The online databases have been increasingly become a primary source of information especially for an initial research. The aim of this study was to identify the religion and sport studies (RSS) available in Turkish either as an abstract or as a full text via online search. The studies in which the sport and religion topics were found as a primary focus were included in the current study. The electronic databases [Web of Science, Google Akademik, ULAKBIM and National Thesis Electronic Database (NTED)] were searched in 2015 and 2016. A content analysis was performed regarding the aims, methods, findings and affiliations. While the all

articles matching the criteria were open access, only the three out of seven theses identified in NTED were provided with full text open access. Most of the studies were produced from the sports and religion/Islam sciences in similar amount; majority of them were published in sport sciences journals. Despite a growing number of researches based in Turkey or in Turkish, the RSS have emerged as a context being subject to few scientific analyses nationally or internationally in relation to Turkey. This preliminary review of the literature may provide a reference point for the relevant researches and practices.

Key Words: Literature, Religion, Sport, Turkey

INTRODUCTION

Social sciences recognize religion (as well as leisure) as one of the basic social institutions. Religion is in an interactive relationship with the fields of sports as with the other social units that constitute society (Johnstone 2001). Güler and Onat (1999) claims that contrary to what is suggested by many social scientists and philosophers (based on the social changes such as with industrialization and fast communication); development and revival of religions were observed since twentieth century especially in the Islamic countries, America, Asia and Far East, while in Europe, this was observed less intensely (Güler and Onat 1999).

“Religion has always been and continues to be woven into the fabric of cultures and civilizations in ways that are inextricable” (Moore 2007). Interpretations of religion or religious beliefs in a given society are significantly conditioned by the complexity of existing social patterns and relationships (Johnstone 2001). Thus, those changes in interpretations can be observed in individuals of same groups of societies depends on their unique interactions. In this context, “sociological dimensions of religion often stir/create controversy in sociology of sport classrooms” (Coakley 2007). It can be difficult to predict the perceptions about the various dimensions of religion and its possible relationship(s) with sport in a changing society, thus, it is essential to bring those dimensions and relationships into view based on scientific evidences (Canbaz 2004).

However, even in religion or sports related fields of science, sport and religion contexts are observed as not a widely shared and discussed scientific content in Turkish (Canbaz 2004, Eke 2014), compared to some other topics in Turkey. This is important, as in any context, especially in times where for example the political and institutional changes and new practical collaborations are being constituted including in the context of national governance of sport and religion in Turkey in terms of, for example, values education for youth, making religious and sports (and all other) sites accessible for people with disabilities or having sporting activities and information available for people with religious occupations.

Many philosophers address that the scientific gap in the context of religion and values may pose a threat and serious problems for humanity (Güler and Onat 1999). Hence, the prevalence and extent of the observed miscalculations regarding religion(s) and related issues today are distressing for their potential to increase vulnerabilities (Plener et al 2017). Recent

worrisome developments, for example, in relation to not only the refugees but also their religious identities have increasingly occupied the international social and academic agenda (Zunes 2017, Cleland et al 2017, Plener et al 2017). Moreover, these current investigations were extended to the sports contexts (Marshall 2016, Briskman and Latham 2017). Not only these current accounts but also the broader issues in relation to the sport and religion continued to remain on the agenda of global social change (Canbaz 2004, Benn et al 2017).

Today, the average number of readings per scientist continues to increase, “while the average time spent per reading is decreasing” (Tenopir et al 2009). Since the electronic alternatives to journals became more widespread, diverse sources have started to be included in reading patterns. A variety of information-seeking methods includes browsing, online searching, following citation links, getting recommendations from colleagues along with in library solutions (Tenopir and King 2000, 2002, Tenopir 2003a, b, Tenopir et al 2009). As a primary source of information especially for an initial research, scholarly papers found in online databases can inform us about the capacity of these initial sources. Based on the claims (Canbaz 2004, Eke 2014) about the lack of religion and sport studies (hereafter referred to as RSS) and the relevant assumption of the current study regarding lack of scholarly share on these issues, the aim of this study was to examine the extent of the RSS published online and in Turkish to provide an evaluation that constructive to the researchers who will build on the work in this field and hopefully as a small contribution reducing relevant vulnerabilities in societies.

METHOD

This is a systematic review and content analysis of studies in which a primary focus of research is related to sport and religion. Web of Science, Google Akademik, ULAKBIM and national thesis electronic databases (NTED) were used as data sources. Therefore, the graduate thesis, articles and books as well were included in the current study.

The search was conducted with the combined Turkish keywords of “physical education, sport, religion, lehv, sunnah, islam, muslim, fikh”. The electronic databases were searched first in December 2015, second in September 2016 and last in December 2016. The content analysis of the studies was performed regarding their aims, methods and affiliations such as their years, language, main themes, universities or departments that they were produced. Further

communications were established to reach out the full texts or abstracts that were not available online. The articles that have their either abstract(s) or full texts available online were included in the Table 2 while all of the theses were shared in Table 1. It was indicated in Table 1 if their full texts were available online or collected by further communication. Moreover, it was marked whether these online studies were available in full text or abstract as an open access or not.

There might be more online studies that could not be identified due to several reasons for example, the limitations of the search engines or keywords. Moreover, studies which were not released online (for example İmamoğlu et al 1999, 2000) or not written in Turkish neither as an abstract nor as full text (Koca and Hacisoftaoğlu 2011) and not found via search in Turkish keywords (Saraç 2012) were not included in the tables. However, these types of studies still can be found in this study and in the reference list at the end of this article. The studies comply with the search criteria provided under appendix, separate from the reference list.

FINDINGS

Religion and Sport Theses

There were seven theses identified in NTED having the religion and sport related topic as their main theme (Table 1).

Years: Theses were carried out or submitted to the NTED system in 1994 (n:1), 2004 (1), 2008 (n:1), 2010 (n:1) and in 2014 (n:3).

Languages & Accession: All of the full texts of the theses were written in Turkish while only one of them (Yılmaz 1994) did not include an English abstract in addition to the Turkish abstract; this information is provided under the Language column in Table 1.

At the time of research (2015, 2016), three of the theses were provided as full text and open access in NTED while the others appeared as abstract(s) only. However, we could obtain three more of the full texts from the authors and advisor via personal communications. Usually, other than the NTED, all of the theses are archived in the library of the respective department and/or university where theses are carried out. There is only one thesis (Çalışır 2014) we could

not reach through personal communications and we could not travel to the respective city (Muğla) or somehow obtain from the library.

Affiliations: All of these graduate works were produced as master degree theses; two from the departments related to sport sciences and five from the departments related to sociology or philosophy of religion or “Basic Islam Sciences” (Table 1). However, one of them (Canbaz 2004), for example, was written in Basic Islam Sciences under the supervision of the professor with an academic affiliation in sociology of sport -though we did not review all of the professors’ background.

Overall, the seven theses are affiliated to four different universities; These are Atatürk University (n:2), Marmara University (n:2), Selçuk University (n:2) and Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University (1).

Other: There was one more thesis (Boybey 1996) in Turkish which was cited and used in the reference list of a relevant research found online (İmamoğlu et al 2013). However, this was an undergraduate thesis. Historically, neither undergraduate theses nor their systematic online recordings have been common practices in all universities in Turkey. Thus, they were not considered in the current study.

Content: Three of the thesis conducted questionnaires (Canbaz 2004, Akgül 2014, Çalışır 2014) and two of them approached to religion and sport more comprehensively, for example in the context of popular culture (Akgül 2014) and social change (Canbaz 2004). There are ten years between these two comprehensive studies. One of the three studies conducted with questionnaires focused on the relationship between religiosity and psychological health in athletes (Çalışır, 2014).

The four theses, on the other hand, tried to explain how sport (Yılmaz 1994, Eke 2014), play (Güvendi 2008) or hunting (Çetinkaya 2010) have involved in the particular aspects of the belief systems such as in sunnah, Qoran (Yılmaz 1994, Güvendi 2008, Çetinkaya 2010, Eke 2014) and in Shaolin Temple (Eke 2014).

Religion and Sport Studies as Articles and Proceedings

The fifteen articles and seven proceedings were identified in GA and ULAKBIM having the religion and sport related topic as their main theme and complying with the criteria (Table 2). These were explained below.

Years: There is an increase in article publications regarding RSS recently; half of the articles were published since 2014 (Table 2). Overall articles were published in 2003 (n:1), 2004 (n:1), 2006 (n:1), 2008 (n:2), 2011 (n:2), 2014 (n:1), 2015 (n:2) and in 2016 (n:4).

Languages & Accession: The full texts of the articles were written both in English and Turkish (n:1), only in English (n:2) and only in Turkish (n:12). All of the articles, except the Akdemir (2008)'s, were provided with Turkish and English abstracts (Table 2). All of these articles were available online and free access (Table 2).

The number of the articles identified in GA and ULAKBIM were also appeared as proceedings in GA while some other articles presented in scientific meetings were identified through their indications in respective articles and not found in GA as proceedings. According to the online records, the last eight articles in Table 2 were both presented at a conference and published as an article while Akdemir (2008)'s study was presented in symposium (Akdemir 2006). There may be more articles in Table 2 presented at scientific meetings too or many more sources published previously but not meeting the criteria in terms of online availability of their abstracts or full texts (as in Akdemir 2006, Taşmektepligil et al 2011, İmamoğlu et al 2000, Üzümlü and Mirzeoğlu 2003). Akdemir (2008)'s study was included in lists at the end of article due to its content availability as full text article which enabled us to identify sport related content. However, there are other studies in literature with similar content, such as Keskin (2007)'s study on hunting, do not provide both full access and concerned key words searched in the current study. Therefore, it is the limitation of this research that such specific studies were not included for given reasons. Thus, the Table 2 includes such studies that can be reached for further content analysis; if they don't provide their relation in abstract, they were excluded.

There was no RSS research found in WoS in Turkish -neither as an abstract nor as a full text.

Affiliations: The fifteen articles were affiliated (by the authors) to the Ankara University (n:1), Atatürk University (n:1), Bartın University (n:2), Bülent Ecevit University (n:1), University of Copenhagen (n:1), Dokuz Eylül University (n:1), Fırat University (n:1), Gazi University (n:1), Harran University (n:1), Sakarya University (n:1) and Ondokuz Mayıs University (n:4). The ten out of fifteen articles were published in journals of sports sciences while five of them were published in their respective faculty of theology (n:3), education (n:1) and Turkic studies (n:1) journals. However, in overall articles, the authors' affiliations were equally distributed between sports sciences (n:7) and Islamic sciences (n:7), while it was with faculty of arts in one article (Table 2).

Content: The three articles in table used questionnaire or scale (Ünver et al 2014, Türkmen et al 2016, Bölükbaşı and Kılıçgil 2004) while twelve of them were reviews or performed content analysis or interpretations in relation to religion or religious sources and/or practices (Adam 2003, Altınay 2006, Akdemir 2008, Pfister 2008, Sarıkavak 2011, Telkenaroğlu 2011, İmamoğlu et al 2013, Kuşçuzade 2015, Arslan 2015, İmamoğlu 2016, Arslan 2016, İmamoğlu and Dilek 2016).

Table 1. General Features of the Theses in NTED*

No	Author	Date	Title	University	Department	Online Open Access to Full Text and Abstract in NTED*	Language

1.	Ömer Yılmaz	1994	Sünette Spor/Sport In Sunnah	Atatürk University	Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Basic Islam Sciences	Abstract: Yes	A: T
						Full Text: No.	F: T
						Obtained from the University's Library**.	
2.	Sedat Canbaz	2004	Değişen Toplumda Spor ve Din/Sport and Religion in the Changing Society	Marmara University	Department of Philosophy and Religion Sciences & Sociology of Religion.	Abstract: Yes	A: T&E
						Full Text: No.	F: T
						Obtained from the advisor.	
3.	Sümeysra Güvendi	2008	Fıkıhda Lehv (Oyun ve Eğlence)/ Lehv (Game And Entertainment) in Canon Law	Selçuk University	Institute of Social Sciences Department of Basic Islam Sciences	Abstract: Yes	A: T&E
						Full Text: Yes	F: T
4.	Ömer Çetinkaya	2010	İslam Fıkıhında Avcılık ve Av Hükümleri / Hunting And Relevant Judgments in (Fiqh) Islamic Jurisprudence	Marmara University	Institute of Social Sciences Department of Basic Islam Sciences	Abstract: Yes	A: T&E
						Full Text: Yes	F: T
5.	Mehmet Haşim Akgül	2014	Popüler Spor Kültürü ve Din/ The Culture of Popular Sports and Religion	Selçuk University	Institute of Health Sciences, Sport Management Dept.	Abstract: Yes	A: T&E
						Full Text: Yes	F: T
6.	Özdemir	2014	Din-Spor İlişkisi:Shaolin Tapınağı Örneği/Shaolin Temple as an Example of Relationship Between Religion and Sports	Atatürk University	Institute of Social Sciences, Department of Philosophy and Religion Sciences	Abstract: Yes	A: T&E
	Eke					Full Text: No. Obtained from the author.	F: T
7.	Melih	2014	Sporcularda Psikolojik Sağlık ve Dindarlık İlişkisinin İncelenmesi/ Investigation of the Relationship Between Psychological Health and Religiousness in Athletes	Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University	Institute of Health Sciences, Physical Education and Sport Department	Abstract: Yes	A: T&E
	Çalışır					Full Text: No.	F: T
						Could not obtain.	

*NTED: National Electronic Thesis Database, ** All of the theses are expected to be available in their respectful university library. Here, we indicated how we accessed their full texts if they were not available in NTED.

***Abbreviations under "Language" column; A: Abstract, F: Full Text, T: in Turkish, E: in English.

Table 2. General Features of the Online Articles

	Author(s)	Date	Headline	University	Journal (ing adı)	Databas e	O.O. A.*	Language**
1.	Hüdaverdi Adam	2003	İslam ve Spor/İslam and Sport	Sakarya University Faculty of Education/ Theology	Sakarya Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	ULAKBIM	Yes	A: T&E F: T
2.	Zeynep Bölükbaşı, Ertan Kılıçgil	2004	Taekwondo ve Yüzme Branşlarındaki Bayan Sporcuların Dindarlık Boyutları/ Piety Dimension of Female Sportmen of Taekwondo and Swimming Branches	Ankara University, School of Physical Education and Sports	Sporometre Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Bilimleri Dergisi	GA	Yes	A: T&E F: T
3.	Ramazan Altınay	2006	Erken Dönem İslam Toplumunda At Yarışları/ Horse Races During the Early Period of the Islamic Society	Dokuz Eylül University, Faculty of Theology	D.E.Ü., İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi Sayı	GA	Yes	A: E&T F: T
4.	Hikmet Akdemir	2008	Kur'an Açısından Ekolojik Denge ve Avlanma	Harran University Faculty of Divinity, Basic Islamic Sciences, Dept of Qur'anic Exegesis	Harran U. İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi	GA	Yes	A: - F: T
5.	Gertrude Pfister (Translated by Pınar Yaprak)	2008	Equality and social missions: Muslim women and their opportunities to participate in sport and physical activities/eşitlik ve sosyal misyonlar: müslüman kadınlar ve spor ve fiziksel aktivitelere katılım fırsatları	University of Copenhagen, Department of Exercise and Sport Sciences (Translation: Marmara Univ. Sport Management Dept.).	Hacettepe J Sport Sci	GA	Yes	A: E&T F: E&T
6.	M.Rahmi Telkenaroglu	2011	İslam Ceza Hukukunda Hukuka Uygunluk Nedeni Olarak 'spor Faaliyetleri'/ "Sports Activities" as a Ground of Justification in Islamic Penal Legislation	Atatürk University, Faculty of Theology	Ataturk U. İlahiyat Fak. Dergisi	GA	Yes	A: T&E F: T
7.	Kazım Sarıkavak	2011	İslâm Filozoflarına Göre Beden Sağlığı/Physical Health According to Islamic Philosophers	Gazi University, Faculty of Arts	Gazi Türkiyat Tükoloji Araştırmaları Dergisi	GA	Yes	A: T&E F:T.
8.	Osman İmamoğlu, Mutlu Türkmen, Bilal Demirhan, M. Çebi	2013	İslamın Doğuşu ve Asrısaaadet Döneminde Sporun Önemi/ The significance of Sport During the Birth and Golden Age of Islam	Ondokuz Mayıs University, Faculty of Sport Sciences & Bartın University, School of PE	Vestnik Fiziçeskoy Kulturi i Sporta	GA	Yes	A: T&E F:T.
9.	Şaban Ünver, Gül Çavuşoğlu, İzzet İslamoğlu	2014	Spor Bilimler ve İlahiyat Fakültesi Öğrencilerinin Benlik Saygısı ve Psikosomatik Belirtilerinin Karşılaştırılması/ A Comparison of Self-Esteem of Sports Sciences and Theology Faculty Students	Ondokuz Mayıs University, Health Sciences Inst./PE/Faculty of Sport Sciences	IntJSCS**	GA,	Yes	A: T&E F: T
10.	Münir Kuşçuzade	2015	Sünette Spor, Sport in Al-Sunnah	Bartın University, Faculty of Islamic Sciences	IntJSCS**	GA, ULAKBIM	Yes	A: E&T F: T
11.	Ali Arslan	2015	Hız. Peygamber (Sav)'in Spora Getirdiği Anlayış Çerçevesinde Hayvanları Hedef Yapma Yasağı/ The Prohibition of the Targeting of Animals in the Context of Prophet Muhammed (pbuh)'s Understanding of Sport	Bülent Ecevit University, Faculty of Theology	IntJSCS**	GA, ULAKBIM	Yes	A: T&E F:T

12	Mutlu Türkmen, Yunus Abdurahi moğlu, Serkan Varol, Mustafa Gökdağ	2016	İslami İlimler Fakültesi Öğrencilerinin Spora Yönelik Tutumlarının İncelenmesi (Bartın Üniversitesi Örneği)/ The Attitudes of the Students Attending to Faculty of Islamic Sciences towards Sports (The Sample of Bartın University)	Bartın University, School of PE, Faculty of Islamic Sciences	IntJSCS**	GA, ULAKBİM	Yes	A: E&T F: T
13	Osman İmamoğlu, Ahmet Naci Dilek.	2016	Namaz ve Yoganın İnsan Organizmasındaki Ortak Faydaları/ Common Benefits of Prayer and Yoga on Human Organism	Ondokuz Mayıs University, Faculty of Sport Sciences	IntJSCS**	GA, ULAKBİM	Yes	A: T&E F: E
14	Osman İMAMOĞLU	2016	Namazın Egzersiz ve Sportif Yönü İle Faydaları/ Benefits of Prayer as a Physical Activity	Ondokuz Mayıs University, Faculty of Sport Sciences	IntJSCS**	GA, ULAKBİM	Yes	A: T&E F: E
15	Cengiz Arslan	2016	Ahmet Yesevi Felsefesi Açısından Dünya’da Spor ve Barış/ Sport and Peace in the World in terms of Ahmet Yesevi Philosophy	Fırat University, School of Physical Education and Sports	IntJSCS**	GA, ULAKBİM	Yes	A: T&E F: T

*O.O.A.: Online open access to full text. Abbreviations under O.O.A.: GA: Google Akademik. **IntJSCS: International Journal of Science Culture and Sport, ***Abbreviations under “Language” column; A: Abstract, F: Full Text, T: in Turkish, E: in English.

Some of these twelve articles approached religion and sporting issues by especially focusing on early Islamic period (Altınay 2006, İmamoğlu et al 2013) and on socio-political or juridical issues (Pfister 2008, Telkenaroğlu 2011) while some others mainly approached by drawing on the Quran (Akdemir 2008), perspectives of notable personalities such as the prophet (Arslan 2015, Kuşçuzade 2015), Ahmet Yesevi (Arslan 2016) and Islamic Philosophers (Sarıkavak 2011). Pfister (2008)’s review is the only study that focuses on insights on Muslim women’s experiences and aspects of gender issues as full text open access in both Turkish and English languages.

Books, Studies in English and Some Other Sources

The thesis of Eke (2014) on Shaolin Temple, sports and religion was also published as a book in 2015, titled as “Kung Fu and Zen in the Shaolin Temple”. As a book chapter, Akyüz’s content was found as a hard copy which is unavailable online (Akyüz, 1994, 2007); However, there were web pages ([http://www.tulipandrose.net/Depo/PDF/Spor_\(Asri_Saaddette\).pdf](http://www.tulipandrose.net/Depo/PDF/Spor_(Asri_Saaddette).pdf)) and power point presentation ([http://www.tulipandrose.net/Depo/PDF/Spor_\(Asri_Saaddette\).pdf](http://www.tulipandrose.net/Depo/PDF/Spor_(Asri_Saaddette).pdf)) that were available as online free access and included the content of this book chapter.

As indicated, there was no Turkish research found in WoS. However, there was for example a study with Turkish address by Saraç (2012), similar to the thesis by Çalışır (2014) due to its combined survey structure using religiosity scale. While Çalışır's study was in relation to the psychological health, Saraç (2012)'s research was in relation to homophobic attitudes.

Although the purpose of the current study did not include the English literature search, it was tested what can be found and if it is accessible for Turkish readers by simple search conducted in GA with the focus on and key words of "Turkey", "sport" and "religion" in English. There were 98 pages featured, though most were irrelevant depend on the search criteria. The undergraduate student who uses Turkish as a primary means of language and limited English have identified the studies focusing on religion and sport and has affiliations with Turkey or Turkish language among 98 pages list. However, there was, for example, a relevant book chapter in English which could not be identified by the students even though it had a Turkish title but not an abstract or full text in Turkish. The reasons explained by the students for this were for example, they thought it must have been an irrelevant study, because, there were no sport related keywords at the GA search summary, and the student was not familiar with the names and affiliations of the researcher and the concerned study featured in latter pages where usually irrelevant results were featured.

There are only few other sources that were not listed at the end of the article and in tables such as the English sources above and the book published by directorate of religious affairs (Turan 1985), or considerable amount of proceedings online as titles only or with abstracts or maybe full texts in hard copy books of abstracts that were usually not found in the online search engines. However, they were found for example in reference lists of online available sources (such as Hafez Efsal İsmail no date of publication, Turan 1985, Boybey 1996) and with direct search of their titles online, sometimes in stores that provide rare books or through personal familiarity or snowball sampling way of search.

Discussion

Religion, together with the sports or leisure (and other basic social institutions including family, education, politics, and economy) has a role in adoption, maintenance and spread of the morals and values (Kuter and Kuter 2012). Moreover, sporting memberships can become central cultural identity especially among males through the soccer teams, alongside religion or secularism or any other ethnic, political, and cultural identities in contemporary Turkey (McManus 2013); as McManus (2013) states “For the most fanatical, it is the primary identity: Besiktas, fan first, Turk or Muslim second”. Religion is also used intentionally, such as to trigger culture wars by exploiting vulnerabilities through for example false representation of the facts, demonization of the other and the self-righteous perspectives; more importantly, the most profound victims of such exploitations are our children (Moore 2007). Walseth and Pfister (2003)’s study “revealed that the different interpretations of Islam had consequences for the informants’ participation in sport”. Issues “related to the use of the veil, gender segregation, the concept of ‘excitement’ (non-sexual movements) and the power relationship between women and men” were pointed out (Walseth and Pfister). Therefore, there is a need for ongoing contributions of social sciences which can play a significant role confronting such/relevant exploitations.

Based on the assumption regarding lack of scholarly share in general on these issues in Turkey; we aimed to identify the religion and sport studies (RSS) available in Turkish either as an abstract or as a full text via online search in this study. The theses, articles, proceedings and scholarly books in which the sport and religion topics found as a primary focus were included in the current study. Studies found in the electronic databases (WoS, GA, ULAKBIM, NTED) had covered diverse issues such as the meanings, value and importance of sport from the point of religion including Qur’an, Islamic jurisprudence, sunnah or other leading religious or Islamic characters. Moreover, they examined the relationships between the religion, usually the Islam and sport. There is considerably less but some instructive studies provided in Turkish which is useful for further inquiries. However, considering the quality and quantity of what is produced on religion, sport and Turkey especially in English literature, there is for sure need for further critical analysis reflecting Turkish contexts.

Despite the similarities, it seems that the different cultures of scientific approaches as well as the reflexivity in general plays an important role in the studies for example in terms of their use of topics, methodology and perspectives. Because of the “ways of seeing” can change radically, need of referring reflexivity becomes accentuated, especially when walking across the fields of different cultures of science; the studies of religion may be one of the most critical fields in this context (Flanagan 2007). While studies point for example “there are many historically formed prejudices and stereotypes about Turkey in European societies” (Oner 2015), many Turkish scholars’ imagination may not be independent from (such) prejudices since the polarization within societies mostly arise from political and religious memberships (Bilgiç et al 2014). Another argument in terms of studies of religion was held in the network of sociology of sport, a member’s statement pointed for example to the threats to research freed from dogma. Moreover, associated (sports and religion) organizations were also criticized for focusing on spreading religious beliefs in connection with sports events and involvement and not much to what might be identified as ethical problems in sports (Coakley 2007). These (sometimes contested) aspects are very crucial when constructing the study of religion and thinking about reflexivity, because, for example, the religion is one of the prominent elements for people’s prejudiced, unfair or intolerant attitudes (Oner 2015), (as a field of study) is not always comply with the traditions of science, and hosting many contested perspectives and results (Thompson 2004).

Local or multilingual scholarly papers play an important role in academic life for several reasons. What is in share in one language may not be in another one. This is important not only for the (lack of) share of the information but also for the (lack of the) elimination of the bias of the analyses and in the reflexivity (for not all scholarly writings are taken into account and for they are not open for the critics of all scholars who use different languages). According to the study in Turkey regarding the knowledge and attitudes of academicians about foreign language; 75% of the academicians thought that they understood the studies written in English; in addition, the 99 academicians’ level of Turkish language use in their academic lives was 70% and above, while 19 academicians had 60, 50 or 40% use of Turkish (Yavuzer and Göver 2012). Moreover, it seems like the language is the primary means of limitation since all of the articles matching the criteria were open access (only the three out of seven theses

identified in NTED were provided with full text open access while others appeared as abstracts only, but we were able to collect the most of the papers with further communications).

There is an increase in Turkish article publications regarding RSS recently. Although we did not compare in this study, there are apparently more studies with a main focus on religion and sport in Turkish than in English in the context of Turkey. However, there is a scarcity of Turkish scholarly papers of RSS considering the greater amount of overall RSS in English. When fields are not developed equally in different languages, vulnerabilities may increase more at different social categories. For example, higher education students or graduates may struggle more than the academicians to access scientific information in foreign languages. Although the reading patterns of scientists and non-scientists were relatively similar, non-scientists read less articles and scientists are more likely to have an additional personal or institutional (such as library) subscriptions (Belefant-Miller and King 2001, Tenopir et al 2009). The reflections of under-developed academic lines may be more destructive in several societal levels.

While scholarly studies in Turkish are as less as revealed here, other writings online with or without indication of source, such as the articles in blogs and forums, have been increasingly taking place in Turkish websites. This may mean an increase in awareness, stimulation of the demand for the issue or spread of misinformation and misinterpretations to the mass. The World Wide Web is a fruitful environment enables the massive diffusion and reproduction of misinterpretations and unverified rumors (Vicario et al 2016). Vicario et al (2016)'s massive quantitative analysis of Facebook showed that "information related to distinct narratives -conspiracy theories and scientific news- generates homogeneous and polarized communities (i.e., echo chambers) having similar information consumption patterns" and the model of rumor spreading reveals that "homogeneity and polarization are the main determinants for predicting cascades' size". This reminds us the size and variety of the unverified, non-scientific information; even in scholarly papers, the issues regarding reflexivity appear more problematic in such conditions. It can be said that it is a critical time of period to deal with related vulnerabilities which (may) raise from the lack of RSS share within academia and society and may lead the elements of society to build on either sand or solid foundations.

Although the quality and the coverage capacity of the online sources and databases have been criticized (Vicario et al 2016, Prins et al 2016), they have increasingly become a

primary source of information especially for an initial research. At such times with limited research and having online accessibility, they may be the only sources that readers are exposed today. Electronic articles were accounted for the majority of readings particularly among science faculty (Tenopir et al 2009, King et al. 2003).

In search of what is available online regarding RSS, the most of the studies was found in GA. While studies critical of Google Scholar (GS) point at its reliability of data, since GS indexes non-scholarly sources, preprint versions and publications that are not peer-reviewed as well, the reliability of the GS data can be improved with careful evaluations (Prins et al 2016). The restrictions by the use of GS includes such as “the intensive manual data handling and cleaning, necessary for a feasible and proper data collection” (Prins et al 2016).

It is claimed that “library provided electronic journals are the single most common source for article readings today by science faculty” (Tenopir et al 2009) while this can change in particular times and by (re)search groups. Sport related scholars for example familiar with journals in particular indexes such as SPORTDiscuss, EBSCO, WoS and others as well which have been usually known for their coverage of journals in English. There is no religion and sport research found in Turkish in WoS in the current research, while there was in English. Therefore, for the current research, GA or GS was found useful for purposes of accessing scholarly papers and others in local language. It was also found promising to use GS in addition to other research indices especially as a resource freely available to anyone with Internet connectivity, “for fields with lower degrees of coverage in WoS, in particular for fields that produce more diverse types of output than just research articles”, to cover other modes of scholarly communication (Prins et al 2016) and especially for a relatively recent article, author or subject area (Bauer and Bakkalbaşı 2005, Prins et al 2016).

Interdisciplinarity “considers a variety of intellectual and practical questions not normally asked in ordinary disciplinary pursuits” (Brewer 1999). While more scholarly works have been produced in Islamic sciences, majority (two-thirds) of the articles were published in sport sciences journals. It was the journals of the Islamic sciences in the latter case. RSS Publications in sport sciences have increased since 2013 or 2014. However, still the Islamic sciences have produced scholarly shares and set some of the foundations for RSS more and since earlier periods. Still, on some issues, such as Pfister (2008)’s account of Muslim women and sport, there are few studies in Turkish; More of these associated accounts (such as in Benn

et al (2011)'s book which consist of women's accounts from fourteen different nations including Turkey), can be found in English literature (e.g. Dagkas and Benn 2006, Benn et al 2011, 2017), in a way that reframed with concepts of Muslim, Islam and as such, while such accounts of religion can be found in local (Turkish) scholarly papers of sports and sport sociology usually without a religion-oriented contextualization. Brewer (1999)'s statement below on contextualization makes us think that RSS is in its infancy period in terms of its many dimensions.

Contextuality means “understanding the relationship between the parts and whole of a problem. It also means having a clear sense and appreciation of the past, present, and future of events as they interact and change through time. Being contextual requires a comprehensive framework to direct one's attention to possibly significant phenomena in a specific spatial and temporal setting. It also requires one to maintain a tentative, evolving appreciation of the whole. While some having an environmental bent appreciate these requirements, wide-spread attainment of them remains a challenge” (Brewer 1999).

Conclusion

When considering the overall literature based in Turkey or in Turkish including the studies found in WoS, ULAKBIM, GA search engines and NTED, sport and religion has emerged as a context being subject to few scientific analyses. This may be an unexpected or thought provoking result for the scholars who considered the religion and sport as a well developed line of study. We suggest that there is a need for ongoing contributions of social sciences which can play a significant role confronting relevant exploitations -keeping in mind every aspect of society. We recommend further studies to explore more of the currently available studies, provide critical content in local languages to shed light on for example the quality of the literature, the ways of the studying, understanding religion and sport issues and how to engage in better actions in science and society.

There seems to be disciplinary differences and similarities in the coverage of the RSS. While the numbers of articles produced have been equally distributed between the sports and

Islamic sciences, the sports sciences journals have hosted RSS more than the journals in Islamic sciences or in any other field. There may be critical reflections and specific evaluations in future based on the different cultures, methodologies and interpretations of these studies.

Although the quality and the coverage capacity of the online databases have been criticized, they have been increasingly become a primary source of information especially for an initial research. In the context of RSS, alternative and additional sources to online databases are continue to be important because not only the RSS have been scarce in literature, but also the online and linguistic access to the related journals or studies have been a recent issue. Still, not all of the older journals have an online access especially to their older issues. In near future, those possible unknown older publications too may come to light for the researchers' re-evaluations, since more journals recently put their older archives on the internet gradually. Further research could be conducted to review for example the studies in English and in other languages, in different databases and keywords. There is also a need for further research for the contents which were not open access and/or accessible online as well as in depth analysis of listed studies in this research. Due to the significant limitations in the research process (especially time, late arrivals of full text data, etc.), we did not include in depth systematic analysis within the current research.

There were less but some instructive studies provided in Turkish useful for further studies. However, considering the quality and quantity of what is produced on religion, sport and Turkey especially in English literature, there is for sure need for further critical analysis reflecting Turkish contexts.

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Appendix A:

The chronological list of religion and sport studies available as an abstract or full text with online search in Turkish (see the search criteria under the methods section and reference list for more relevant studies)

A.1. Master Theses

1) Yılmaz Ö. (1994). Sünnette Spor (Sport in Sunnah). Atatürk Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Temel İslam Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Danışman: Yrd. Doç. Dr. İbrahim Bayraktar, Erzurum.

2) Canbaz S. (2004). Değişen Toplumda Din ve Spor (Sport and religion in the changing society). Marmara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İlahiyat Anabilim Dalı, Din Sosyolojisi Bilim Dalı, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Danışman: Prof. Dr. Mehmet Tayfun Amman, İstanbul.

3) Güvendi S. (2008). Fıkıhda Lehv (Oyun ve Eğlence). [Lehv (Play and Pleasure) in Fiqh]. Selçuk Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Temel İslam Bilimleri Ana Bilim Dalı, İslam Hukuku Bilim Dalı, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Danışman: Prof. Dr. Hüseyin Tekin Gökmenoğlu, Konya.

4) Çetinkaya Ö. (2010). İslam Fıkıhında Avcılık ve Av Hükümleri (Hunting and Relevant Judgments in (Fıqh) Islamic Jurisprudence). Marmara Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Temel İslam Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı, İslam Hukuku Bilim Dalı, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Danışman: Prof. Dr. Celal Yeniçeri İstanbul.

- 5) Eke Ö. (2014). Din-Spor İlişkisi (Shaolin Tapınağı Örneği) (Relationship Between Religion and Sports: Case of Shaolin Temple) Atatürk Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Felsefe ve Din Bilimleri Anabilim Dalı, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Danışman: Prof. Dr. Kemal Polat, Erzurum.
- 6) Akgül M.H. (2014). Popüler Spor Kültürü ve Din (The Culture of Popular Sports and Religion). Selçuk Üniversitesi, Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Spor Yöneticiliği Anabilim Dalı, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Danışman: Doç. Dr. Turgut Kaplan.
- 7) Çalışır M. (2014). Sporcularda Psikolojik Sağlık ve Dindarlık İlişkisinin İncelenmesi. (Investigation of the Relationship Between Psychological Health and Religiousness in Athletes). Muğla Üniversitesi, Sağlık Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Beden Eğitimi ve Spor Ana Bilim Dalı, Yüksek Lisans Tezi, Danışman: Doç. Dr. Fahri Akçakoyun, Muğla.

A.2. Proceedings

1. İmamoğlu O., Türkmen M., Demirhan B, Çebi M. (2013). İslamın doğuşu ve Asrısadet Döneminde Sporun Önemi (The Significance of Sport During the Birth and Golden Age of Islam). The State Republic Center of National Games, Development of Kyrgyz Republic. Çolpan-Ata-Issık- Köl, Kyrgyzstan.
2. Kuşçuzade M. (2015). Sünette Spor. (Sports In Al-Sunnah). 4th International Conference on Science Culture and Sport. 22-26 May, Ohrid, Macedonia.
3. İmamoğlu O.,Türkmen M., Akdenk M., Çebi M. (1999/2000). Osmanlı Devletinin Spor Politikasını Etkileyen Unsurlar. Osmanlı Devleti'nin Kuruluşunun 700. Yılı Münasebetiyle Osmanlıda Spor Sempezyomu, Alaaeddin Keykubat Kampusu, 26-27 Mayıs, Konya (full text provided with further communication and published as open access article as below).
4. Imamoğlu O., Dilek A.N. (2016). Namaz ve Yoganın İnsan Organizmasındaki Ortak Faydaları. 5th International Conference on Science Culture and Sport. 13-15 April, Turkistan, Kazakhstan.
5. Arslan C. (2016). Ahmet Yesevi Felsefi Açısından Dünya'da Spor ve Barış.(Sport And Peace in the World in terms of Ahmet Yesevi Philosophy). 5th International Conference on Science Culture and Sport. 13-15 April, Turkistan, Kazakhstan.

6. Imamoğlu O. (2016). Namazın Egzersiz ve Sportif Yönü İle Faydaları. 5th International Conference on Science Culture and Sport. 13-15 April, Turkistan, Kazakhstan.
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A.3. Articles

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3. Altınay R. (2006). Erken dönem islam toplumunda at yarışları (Horse races during the early period of the islamic society). D.E.Ü. *İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi*, sayı 17, İzmir2006, ss.129-144.
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12. İmamoğlu O. (2016). Namazın Egzersiz ve Sportif Yönü ile Faydaları. (Benefits of Prayer as a Physical Activity). *International Journal of Science Culture and Spor(intJSCS)*, 4(special issue 1):2148-1148.
13. Arslan C. (2016). Ahmet Yesevi Felsefi Açısından Dünya’da Spor ve Barış. (Sport and Peace in the World in terms of Ahmet Yesevi Philosophy). *International Journal of Science Culture and Sport (intJSCS)*, 4 (special issue: 1):2148-1148.
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A.4. Books or Book Chapters

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